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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

Report on the evaluation of the United Nations Development for Women

Note by the Administrator

1. In its decision 95/32 of 13 September 1995, the Executive Board decided that the Administrator, in close consultation with the United Nations Office for Project Services, as appropriate, should select consultants on a competitive basis to carry out the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, which the Board had called for in its decision 95/10 of 7 April 1995.

2. The consulting firm of Management Systems International was engaged to carry out the evaluation.

3. The attached executive summary of the evaluation has been prepared by the consulting firm and is hereby circulated to the Executive Board. The full text of the original report is also being made available to members of the Executive Board.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) called for an external evaluation of UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (decision 95/10) and, taking into account relevant Resolutions and decisions made by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Executive Board and the Consultative Committee proposed that the evaluation undertake four objectives which are reported on and discussed below: overall past and present achievements, impact and sustainability of programme activities, institutional capacity and structure, and the effectiveness of work with collaborators.

1. Assess and identify the overall past and present achievements, efficiency, impact and sustainability of programme activities at headquarters and in the field in fulfilling the Fund's mandate.

Relative to its size,[1] the mandate of UNIFEM and its predecessor, the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women, is expansive, addressing as it does the concerns and efforts of women around the world living under widely varying economic and social conditions.

In order to capture UNIFEM's past and present achievements it is important to note that UNIFEM describes its mandate and mode of operation as having three distinct periods. The first of these, 1975 to 1985, covers the years before UNIFEM became an autonomous agency within the UN. This period ends during the same year in which the Third World Conference on Women, which produced the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, was held. The second period, 1985 to 1994, spans the period from UNIFEM's creation through most of the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. The third period, which opened with the Fourth World Conference on Women and the issuance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, has only just begun, yet an outline of UNIFEM's new structure has already emerged.

This external evaluation, requested by the Executive Board of UNDP, has focused on UNIFEM's activities during the time period from 1990-1995. In the discourse that follows, the section on *past achievements* cites those activities which occurred prior to this evaluation period and which have been gleaned from documents reviewed for the evaluation; whereas the section on *present achievements* embraces those activities which the evaluation team recorded as having taken place during the period under evaluation, 1990-1995.

Past Achievements

The initial approach taken by the Fund to achieving its mandate, emphasized the direct funding of women's projects and organizations. In the early years, the Fund did not have regional offices and resident overseas staff as it does today. As a result, it initially lacked mechanisms through which it could reach, or be found by, local women's organizations and other grassroots

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[1] UNIFEM's total budget, just under $14 million for 1994, was equal to roughly 1.5% of the budget for UNICEF, and 1% of the budget for UNDP.

entities that undertook activities which benefitted women or strengthened their role in the development process.

To compensate for its lack of field staff, and to act on its mandate to respond to regional needs and to strengthen international and regional organizations, the Fund developed collaborative relationships with the UN's regional economic commissions in Africa, in Latin America, in Asia and the Pacific, and in the Caribbean. To varying degrees, these arrangements offered the Fund a base from which to provide training and technical assistance; become better acquainted with the problems and needs of women in each of these regions; and make itself more visible to women's and grassroots organizations.

In October 1984, the Secretary General provided the General Assembly with a report on the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women that included information about the portfolio of projects that had been financed through December 1983. The picture presented in this document summarized the findings of a "forward looking assessment" that had been undertaken pursuant to the preparation of this report. The portfolio described in that assessment, reflected the approaches and modalities utilized during the initial period of the Fund's operation.

As of the end of 1983, the Fund had financed a total of 378 projects, of which 258 were still financially active at the time. Although the Fund was established in 1975 for the International Women's Year, it did not become operational as a funding source until 1978, with country-level funding for projects starting as late as 1980 in some instances. Substantively, these early projects focused primarily on employment and income generation, e.g., clothing factories, animal husbandry, crafts (42%), human resources development, including training for rural trainers and pilot projects to stimulate self-reliance in rural areas and urban slums (30%); and training for development planners (17%). Geographically, Africa had the highest percentage of projects, roughly 37%, with Latin America, Asia, and global and regional projects each having a successively smaller percentage. Within regions, an effort was made to locate projects in the poorest countries during this early period.

As time went on, women's groups and UNIFEM's mandate from the General Assembly pulled the organization further in the direction of projects and supportive activities that focused beyond *immediate* needs, towards issues central to women's empowerment. While the shift in programming strategy that came to characterize UNIFEM's operations in the late 1980s and early 1990s cannot be tied to a one particular event, its emergence was linked to several developments all of which had an impact on the way UNIFEM approached its work. Coming out of this series of changes, UNIFEM had in place not only a new organizational framework, but also the beginnings of a field staff that could support and expand upon the efforts of staff in the organization's New York headquarters. The plans and programmes it developed to implement this mandate were regional in character.

Present Achievements

For most of the decade from 1985 to 1995, UNIFEM used a regional approach to organizing and managing its programme. UNIFEM's geographic units for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) and Asia and the Pacific (A/P) were complemented by global and regional technical initiatives that took on activities which seemed to have relevance for all regions, or to the

organization as a whole. The strategies and portfolios that emerged in each of the regions reflected a blend of UNIFEM's general precepts and the unique perspectives that emerged from the regions, and from the sectors and topics on which different parts of the organization focused.

What is strikingly clear from a review of UNIFEM's portfolio for the period 1990-1995 are the connections between projects that did not appear to exist in earlier periods. Projects in the UNIFEM portfolio were, by the 1990s, no longer easy to characterize as a set of isolated, stand-alone efforts. Using a regional approach, UNIFEM responded to those portions of its mandate that called for the organization to reflect regional priorities. In selecting a regional and issue-oriented approach to planning, UNIFEM treated certain other priorities within its mandate, e.g., the call for catalytic, innovative approaches and for ensuring that women's concerns and issues were incorporated into mainstream development planning, as means rather than as ends in themselves. In each region, the way in which these "means" were used turned out to be somewhat different, reflecting both the regions themselves and the evolving interests of women in each region, as depicted in the regional summary paragraphs below.

Africa

UNIFEM's regional plan for Africa was updated in 1988, 1990 and again in 1992, establishing a pattern that was subsequently followed in other regions. By the early 1990s, the beginning of the period on which this evaluation concentrates, UNIFEM's approach to the Africa region had evolved to the point where it had four distinct points of emphasis: agriculture, trade and industry, the environment and "women in crisis." UNIFEM staff report that the decision to concentrate in these area grew out of experience as well as out of its understanding of the crisis Africa faced as commodity prices collapsed and donor fatigue set in, and as Africa's debt mounted and political turmoil erupted, with terrible human consequences.

Food Technologies. On the agricultural side, Africa's *Cameroon Cassava Processing* Project is one of UNIFEM's crowning achievements. In 1991 UNIFEM field and headquarters staff convened to discuss themes to assist local women's groups and projects. The need for a business or market perspective on agricultural projects was one of the key themes, as was the need for women farmers and farming groups to be ecologically sound in selecting crops, picking those marketable crops which grow easily and naturally, being aware of transportation, storage, and spoilage issues. This commodity approach to the issue of food security looks at one commodity and at the entire chain of cultivation, harvesting, processing, transport, and markets, and attempts to increase access, productivity and incomes in all the various parts of the chain. Cameroon's Cassava Project has been documented and reports about the project have been shared extensively with women in and beyond Africa. It has sparked a *Food Technologies Contest* in the Andean countries of Latin America that is an effective mechanism for a continuing dialogue between *campesino* women and government decision-makers in those countries where the contest takes place. A video of the Cassava Project was featured at the Beijing Conference.

Credit projects for women are another of UNIFEM's important contributions, as well as an important element of Africa's Trade and Industry portfolio. The availability of credit for women is a persistent problem in developing countries, and UNIFEM has addressed this problem at the country-level in a number of countries in Africa. The *Credit Scheme for Productive Activities of*

Women in Tanzania/Zanzibar (URT/89/W01 and URT/92/W02) were innovative pilot projects characterized by their multidimensional thrust -- the most significant of which was the transformation of the government-run projects into independent NGOs which assumed on-going responsibility for the Credit Scheme Projects.

Environment. UNIFEM's environmental focus in Africa is a response to UNCED's Agenda 21, which provides a springboard for linking ecological concerns and agriculture, the sector in which the majority of Africa's women work. To this end, UNIFEM initiated a regional project, *African Women Act* (RAF/93/W15), an initial study for developing an approach to environmental concerns and agriculture has been carried out in Zimbabwe.

Women in Crisis. Until 1991, when UNIFEM's Consultative Committee authorized UNIFEM to work on issues of violence against women, UNIFEM's ability to work on issues in this area was limited. Women in Crisis, the fourth focus of the Africa region's strategy emerged from UNIFEM's experience helping refugee women from Liberia to acquire portable "livelihood skills" while living in refugee areas in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. This project, which also introduced trauma counseling for refugee women, helped UNIFEM to understand and articulate the kind of role it could play in a field where the plight of women was both a core issue and one in which no other agency appeared to take a special interest. The situation in Liberia also gave UNIFEM its first opportunity to work closely with UNHCR. Building upon this experience, the region developed an umbrella project, *African Women in Crisis* (RAF/92/W07), through which it subsequently provided assistance to women in Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan and Somalia. Regionally-funded assistance to Rwanda has led, in turn, to country-level projects, *Support to Rwandese Women Refugees* (RWA/94/W01) and *Displaced Rwandese Women Project* (RWA/95/W01).

Latin America and the Caribbean

In 1986, the first Participatory Action Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PAPLAC) was prepared. This plan was developed in collaboration with women in the region, and reflected both the mandate given to UNIFEM in the General Assembly resolution that established this entity, and the priorities established at the Third World Conference to Women in Nairobi in 1985. The LAC region revised its overall strategy for the region in 1994-1995. This strategy draws upon UNIFEM's experiences in LAC in defining its focus which, while including an economic focus and a concern for the environment, is dominated, in programmatic terms, by political and social issues affecting women in the region. Key elements of the strategy that emerge from the 1993 review include: human rights and the elimination of violence against women; women, citizenship and democratization; the elimination of poverty; and women and the environment.

Women's Rights. A significant potion of UNIFEM's work in the LAC region has focused on political issues in the broadest sense, i.e., on human rights, including a special emphasis on violence as an issue that affects women. UNIFEM's emphasis in this area in LAC reflects a strong strain in the agenda of the women's movement in the region. In Brazil, the challenge of transforming *de jure* into *de facto* rights is one issue addressed by the *Legal Women Promoters* (BRA/93/W05) Project. A UNIFEM contribution of $2,500 allowed THEMIS, the implementing organization to train local community workers to educate women about their legal rights. This support gave THEMIS visibility at a critical point in its development, and enabled it to obtain

funding and technical support from the Ford Foundation and GTZ. In Mexico, UNIFEM's support to the *Grupo de Educacion Popular con Mujeres (GEM)* (MEX/93/W12), an NGO that works in legal education for women at the grassroots level, has led to the drafting of a legislative amendment to change family law as currently reflected in the Civil Code of Mexico City, which states that a father's rights over the children always take precedence over the mother's rights; and that a man is allowed to work in any legal undertaking, but a wife is only allowed to work outside the home *if* the husband determines it is not detrimental to the children and *when* her household chores are attended to. Given that changes to the Civil Code of Mexico City are closely monitored by the rest of the country and frequently emulated, it is not surprising that similar legislative amendments are now being contemplated by four other states.

The role of women in the political processes that govern nations in the LAC region is a related emphasis in UNIFEM's strategy for the region. In this area, UNIFEM has defined its role as including efforts that build bridges between women's organizations and public sector decision-making processes. These and other activities, including research and training, that open up the political process to women, are where UNIFEM's efforts have concentrated.

Women, Citizenship and Democratization. Women's role in the political process that govern nations in the LAC region is a related emphasis in UNIFEM's strategy for the region. In this area, UNIFEM has defined its role as including efforts that build bridges between women's organizations and public sector decision-making processes. These and other activities, including research and training, that open up the political process to women are where UNIFEM's efforts have concentrated. Numerous projects in Brazil have focused on this theme.

Violence Against Women. In Brazil, UNIFEM has approached the issue of violence against women from three different angles: *Domestic Violence and the Police* (BRA/93/W06) supported efforts to inform policy makers on the nature of violence against women by generating a national data base on violence and the treatment given by the police to victims; *Expansion of the Capacity to Assist Women in Situations of Violence* (BRA/93/W04) was a project in support of documenting and strengthening the ability to provide an integrated program of legal, psychological, medical and social counseling to women victims of violence; and *Violence Against Women as an Obstacle to Development* (BRA/93/W11) was an effort to target key organizations and opinion makers to inform and educate them on the nature and impact of violence against women, and to strengthen local organizations to combat the problem. In Mexico, as an outgrowth of UNIFEM's project to train urban promoters (GLO/94/W77) and the ongoing work of the *Asociación Mexicana Contra la Violencia a las Mujeres (COVAC)*, which has authoritatively documented the nature and extent of intra-family violence in Mexico, which falls not only on women but also, alarmingly, on their children, a legislative amendment has been placed before Congress defining intra-family violence and making it a criminal offense. This is an accomplishment, given that heretofore intra-family violence in Mexico (between husband and wife and between parents and children) has been considered almost inherent in the family relationship.

Poverty Alleviation. UNIFEM's history in the field of poverty alleviation in LAC subsumes numerous relatively small incomes generating projects. At the same time, economic policy reform in the region was being perceived as contributing to the impoverishment of many who were already poor or who lived close to the poverty margin, even as it improved the economic prospects of others

in these societies. Women's groups in LAC focused on the differential, and negative way, in which these policies appeared to affect women, and UNIFEM made the elimination of poverty one of its priorities as well, focusing its energies within this arena on capacity-building in organizations that women in the region had created to address economic issues and needs, such as Mexico's *Tempoal Project* (MEX/85/W01). Credit projects undertaken in the region, including a large investment in credit for women in the informal sector undertaken with ACCION (RLA/92/W03) and smaller projects, such as its assistance to Women's World Banking in Mexico (MEX/92/W01), played a role in this strategy, as did projects that focused on entrepreneurship development in Barbados (BAR/90/W01) and Jamaica (JAM/93/W01); trade, including the role of women in regional free-trade areas (BRA/95/W50); and community organization, e.g., through the *Women and Development Institute of the University of the West Indies (WAND)* (RLA/92/W04). Employment projects, focusing on agriculture as well as manufacturing, continued to be an element of the LAC portfolio through the period, but their role in the portfolio has become smaller over time.

Women and the Environment. With regards to the area of women and the environment, as was the case in Africa, UNIFEM's LAC region developed an environmental emphasis or priority in response to the UN Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) and its declaration, Agenda 21. Work was also carried out in the region in preparation for this conference which was held in Rio de Janeiro. Four projects, involving Brazilian non-governmental organizations (NGOs), were developed as elements of an overall programme to implement Agenda 21 in Brazil. Several other projects were funded in countries around the region as well as region-wide projects. Some of these projects linked environmental concerns directly to agriculture, while others focused on awareness and public policy.

Asia/Pacific

UNIFEM's first Asia/Pacific Development Strategy (APDEV) was prepared in 1989-90. Its second plan, roughly two years later, was more focused, and sought to shift towards a proactive, rather than a reactive, approach to project identification and selection. The second APDEV took a sectoral focus, emphasizing food security, the environment and industry. The two points that emerged to fit this category were gender sensitization, and data and statistical training. *Radio Technology for Rural Women in Pakistan* (PAK/92/W02), is one early example of projects that used radio to create an awareness of gender issues. *Gender Issues in the 1991 Census* (IND/90/W01), is another early example of a country project that came out of the strategy for key points interventions that began to emerge in the region's second APDEV.

The third APDEV, covering the 1992-1993 period, saw a still further evolution of the thinking that had begun to emerge as being relevant for the Asia/Pacific region in the second regional plan. In this plan, A/P moved away from a sectoral focus, emphasizing instead the points of intervention strategy it had begun to develop in the preceding plan. Education and training, and policies and plans, were singled out as key intervention points for UNIFEM. Building upon interest generated through its census project in India, UNIFEM found it possible to develop longer range statistical systems projects in China, *Statistics in China* (CPR/92/W01), and Indonesia, *Statistics on Gender Issues in Indonesia* (INS/93/W03), and, later, to extend the reach of this type of effort still further through a regional project, *Improving Gender Statistics* (RAS/93/W06). These projects have sparked a cross-regional fertilization in Mexico, where UNIFEM provided technical assistance, with

assistance from the UN Statistical Division, to the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) in the compilation of a gender sensitive statistical data base which provided data for a statistical profile of the Mexican woman at the end of the 20th century, and for Mexico's report to the FWCW.

Working again in the key points intervention mode, UNIFEM began to draw together the threads of work already initiated in the Pacific Islands *Strengthening of Institutional Mechanisms for Gender-Responsive Development* (PMI/89/W01 and PMI/93/W01), and in the Philippines *Strengthening of Institutional Mechanisms for Gender-Responsive Development* (PHI/91/W01), to craft interventions that encouraged gender-sensitive development planning. These two programmes, which developed in separate and distinct ways, established the foundation for further work in this area. In the Pacific Islands, this set of projects demonstrated that training and awareness-building were relevant entry points, while at the same time showing that efforts to affect policy and planning at the national level are long-term efforts. Broad public support and political will within a national government are necessary if efforts to infuse development plans with a gender perspective are to succeed. Work in the Philippines, which eventually resulted in the Philippine Plan for Gender Responsive Development (PPGD), produced similar lessons. In addition, UNIFEM mounted study tours to help officials from 15 other countries become aware of the lessons of the Philippines experience.

Advocacy Initiatives

The term *advocacy* connotes all of the processes and actions that UNIFEM and the organizations with which it works use to bring women's issues and concerns to the attention of national governments, international bodies, and the public. UNIFEM's mandate to advocate on behalf of women's issues and concerns emerged as a result of UNIFEM's experiences in the field and discussions with its Consultative Committee which led to General Assembly Resolution (48/107) in 1993. In practice, UNIFEM's advocacy work cuts across the full range of fields in which it has a programmatic interest.

Advocacy is embedded in projects such as the *Women's Rights as Human Rights Project* as well as in regional and country-level projects. Advocacy is not confined, however, to human rights and related issues. UNIFEM is equally involved in efforts relating to economic empowerment, e.g., efforts that encourage governments to assign value to women's household labor in their national accounts and efforts that encourage government and business to focus on the problems women face when they seek jobs in industries traditionally dominated by males or pursue "equal pay for equal work" in the manufacturing and service industries.

Publishing, however, is one of primary ways in which UNIFEM competes, on women's behalf, for position in the "marketplace of ideas." As often as it can, UNIFEM uses its publishing program to let women speak for themselves. UNIFEM's involvement with publishing began with the booklets it produced in connection with African projects that dealt with technology and the food cycle. These early publications were printed and thousands of copies were distributed by UNIFEM from headquarters as well as by field offices, particularly in Africa. Unable to absorb the increased workload within its existing staff, UNIFEM selected the International Women's Tribune Center to manage the promotion and distribution of all publications it would henceforth sell rather than distribute. The International Tribune Center, in turn, set up a pilot project, Women, Ink, to carry

out these tasks. Having made the decision to expand in this manner, UNIFEM also began to acquire and create titles for its program. Over a reasonably short period, UNIFEM published 14 books and pamphlets under its own name, including *Battered Dreams*, and recent publications that focus on trade, poverty, and advocacy. UNIFEM has also worked with other organizations on joint publications. All of the publications UNIFEM sells are distributed through Women, Ink, which has acquired titles from other sources as well and, by 1996, has brought the list of titles it distributes up to around 200 publications.

Paralleling its work at headquarters, UNIFEM is also engaged in efforts to make women's voices heard in published material in the geographic regions. In India, UNIFEM's regional office is, in collaboration with headquarters, supporting (jointly with the Aga Khan Foundation, Canada) the publication of a volume of eight case studies on women's economic empowerment. In Latin America, UNIFEM has worked for several years with an organization called *FEMPRESS* (RLA/92/W13), a women's media network that, among other things, moves information about women's issues and concerns into the mainstream press. It also works to ensure that women in different parts of the region are aware of what their counterparts are doing in other countries. In Africa, the WIDA publication project has fostered communication among women in the media, researchers and writers.

International Conferences

Although UNIFEM was involved in international conferences prior to 1990, most of these early experiences focused solely on women's concerns. It was not until the 1990s that UNIFEM began to view major international conferences on a variety of topics as a continuum of opportunities to make women's voices heard, and to advance women's involvement in these areas. UNIFEM staff generally agree that the organization's initiation with respect to "working a conference" rather that simply attending one, came with its involvement in the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Its experiences in United Nations conferences and summits -- on environment and development in Rio in 1992, on human rights in Vienna in 1993, on population and development in Cairo in 1994, and on social development in Copenhagen in 1995, illustrate not only UNIFEM's growing skills in this area, but also the development of an ability to link its experiences together and transfer lessons from project to project, issue to issue, and event to event. UNIFEM's first-hand experience in influencing international conferences is documented in *Putting Gender on the Agenda*, 30,000 copies of the English language version of this booklet and 8,000 copies in French and Spanish have been distributed to NGOs.

The Fourth World Conference on Women. However, if it can be said that organizations, like people, come of age, then the Fourth World Conference on Women was certainly UNIFEM's coming out party. From Huairou to Beijing, UNIFEM was the belle of the ball, the one everyone, government and NGO delegates alike, wanted to dance with. UNIFEM's leadership success arrived the old-fashioned way, they earned it. Several years before the FWCW, UNIFEM began preparations by supporting women's groups in countries around the world, to research and develop persuasive and well-documented positions papers at the country level on the issues and concerns affecting the lives of women. In Mexico for example, the research work was undertaken by teams of academics (to provide a theoretical base) working in tandem directly with experienced grass roots NGOs (to provide an empirical base), to identify key results achieved in their specific areas of

expertise in the last ten years.[2] The UNIFEM-led *process* of developing these documents, which was inclusive and highly participatory, and as a consequence, very influential, contributed enormously to their success.

UNIFEM's leadership at the FWCW was visible from the outset with the symbolic Peace Torch that was lit in South Africa jointly by UNIFEM and the African Women in Crisis (AFWIC), and which journeyed through war-torn Africa before arriving at Huairou at the opening ceremony of the NGO Conference that preceded the official conference in Beijing. This torch was passed around from hand to hand against background singing of *Moving Forward*, and became the symbol that galvanized women's aspirations and energies as the working force for the FWCW. UNIFEM was the only international organization mentioned in the opening at Huairou of the NGO Conference, and who was prominently mentioned at the Plenary of the FWCW itself. UNIFEM was equal parts leader, benefactress, counsellor, and colleague at the special events of the NGO conference in Huairou, and the expert consultant, whose advice and approval many delegations sought, at the official Conference in Beijing. UNIFEM was visibly present when First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Honorary Chair of the United States delegation, caught the world's attention by her ringing endorsement of UNIFEM's message at the Plenary session:

> *If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, it is that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights, once and for all.*

The consensus reached in Beijing will now serve as a standard towards which each government of the world should strive, spurred on by the UNIFEM-strengthened networks of NGOs that were so effective and central to the discussions in the preparations, at the NGO conference and later at the FWCW itself. The principles behind this world-wide consensus are that:

- Violence against women in all its forms must be stopped.
- Girls should be protected and valued equally with boys in their families and by societies.
- Women must have access to education and health care of a high quality, and to the levers of economic and political power.
- Family responsibilities should be shared.
- The right of women to control their own fertility, and equality in sexual relations, are fundamental to women's empowerment.
- Freedom of expression is a prerequisite to human rights, which are women's rights.

Sustainability and Impact

One of the evaluation's major objectives was to shed light on the broad question of impact and sustainability at the different points at which UNIFEM programmes operate. Evaluation findings show that UNIFEM project and non-project activities almost always focus at one or more levels within a framework that includes, at the most abstract level, international organizations, and

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[2] In Mexico these areas included: distribution of power in decision-making; gender disaggregated statistics; violence against women; access to health and education benefits; feminization of poverty; women and jobs; women and the environment; and old age and women.

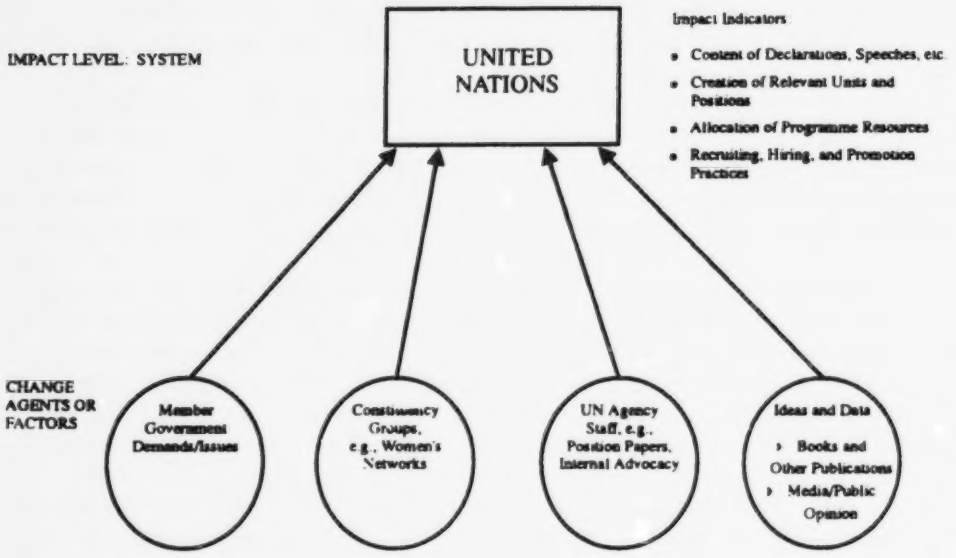
particularly the development-oriented agencies within the UN system. National and local governments are a second, or systemic level on which UNIFEM initiatives for change focus. Closer to the women it represents, UNIFEM has tried to encourage the formation of organizations and networks, and to promote positive changes in those that already exist. Its work also aims at women on an individual basis, through projects that create real opportunities to increase one's livelihood or one's level of involvement in community and national decision-making processes.

UNIFEM's impact at these different levels is interactive. Changes it helps to bring about in women's organizations and networks can lead, in turn, to changes in government policies. *Ad seriatim*, policy changes lead to changes in women's rights, freedoms, access to goods and services, and to changes in their income and well-being. Even when they appear to have a single focus, UNIFEM's projects and activities can be shown to have ripple effects across this continuum.

Sustainability is related to this continuum, and consequently to impact. Sustainability is defined as a situation in which impact, i.e. desired change or transformation in an organizations or individual is "durable," and in which resources (material or human) continue to be available to maintain this change. Because of the material and human dimension, sustainability can be both ideological and financial. The former involves changes in ideas, attitudes and awareness which can be sustained even without material resources. Yet without financial resources to buttress these ideas or attitudes, impact will likely remain at the level of a few committed individuals. Sustainable systemic and organizational changes are not likely to occur. It is within this context that one can better judge UNIFEM initiatives at different levels: UN, governmental, organizational and individual.

UNIFEM and the UN. UNIFEM efforts to bring about change at the level of the UN have taken several forms. Through "mainstreaming" projects and inter-agency meetings and initiatives, on a daily basis, UN staff at headquarters and the field bring gender concerns to the attention of their colleagues. Finally, through its support to preparation and participation in UN conferences, UNIFEM has tried to change the UN's agenda, and in doing so, change the agenda of every country in the world in regard to issues that involve and are of concern to women. *Figure ES-1* shows the modalities through which UNIFEM has pursued changes at the level of the UN. Indicators of impact against which the success of its initiatives can be judged are also shown.

Figure ES-1


IMPACT LEVEL: SYSTEM
UNITED NATIONS
Impact Indicators
• Content of Declarations, Speeches, etc.
• Creation of Relevant Units and Positions
• Allocation of Programme Resources
• Recruiting, Hiring, and Promotion Practices
CHANGE AGENTS OR FACTORS
Member Government Demands/Issues
Constituency Groups, e.g., Women's Networks
UN Agency Staff, e.g., Position Papers, Internal Advocacy
Ideas and Data
› Books and Other Publications
› Media/Public Opinion

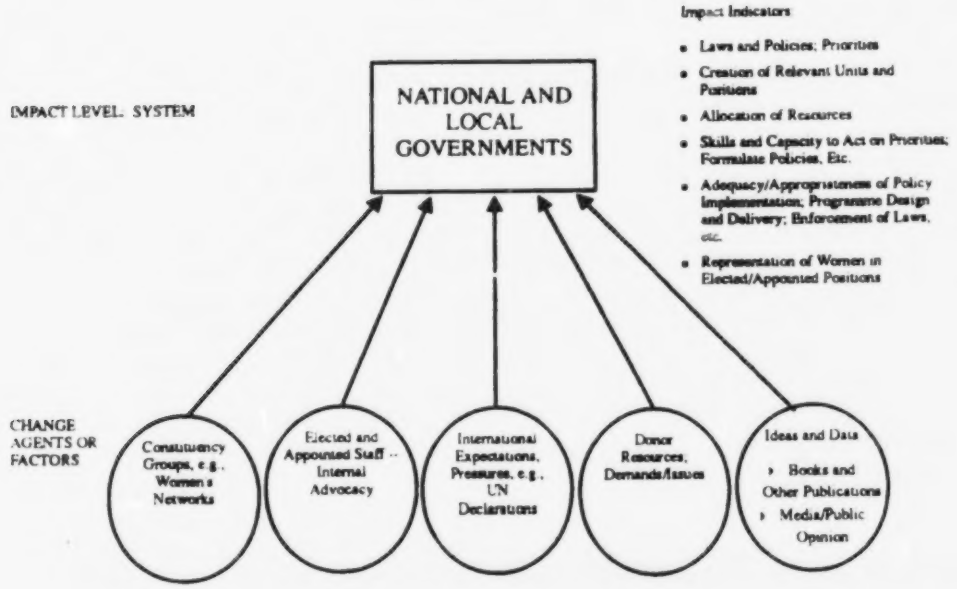
Of all of the ways in which UNIFEM has attempted to bring about change in the UN, national and international conferences are where there has been most impact. The preponderance of evidence suggests quite strongly that commitments which focus on women, included in the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights and in Agenda 21, would not be there, at least not in the form in which they were finally included, had it not been for UNIFEM. While the same can and should be said for the Platform of Action that came out of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, it is easier to take for granted UNIFEM's impact on the UN agenda through conference proceedings that, by definition, focus on women, than it is in declarations that come out of conferences which did not, when they were conceived, have any reason to focus on women or women's concerns.

Nonetheless, UNIFEM's enormous success in meeting the needs and interests of women in developing countries is embodied in the Platform for Action, the final document of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995, which is a powerful and progressive statement regarding the empowerment of women. That 189 nations of the world were able to reach consensus regarding the status of women, the obstacles to their advancement, and the action necessary to empower them, is testimony to the women of the world who organized themselves into a powerful force, and a testament to UNIFEM, the organizing force behind the organized women.

In addition, as the country evidence shows, these conferences and particularly the Beijing Conference, serve as a vehicle through which UNIFEM plays a pro-active role in raising awareness among UN agencies and leveraging their resources in favor of activities that benefit women. At least four cases, Brazil, India, Mexico and Senegal show particularly strong impact in this regard since the Beijing Conference appears to have either initiated or strengthened the process of inter-agency collaboration in a way that appears to be sustained *ex-post*. And as might be expected through cause and effect, this collaboration affects government programmes.

UNIFEM and National Governments. At the government level, UNIFEM is pursuing change through a variety of change instruments, as Figure ES-2 suggests. High on the list of the factors that are leading to change at the national government level, are the declarations that emerge from UN global conferences. By convention, a country's support of such declarations commits it to develop national policies that reflect those commitments. Working at the country level, in the Asia/Pacific region in particular, UNIFEM is having a discernable impact on national development plans and statistical systems. In Latin America and Africa, women's machineries and groups are primary vehicles for change. Globally, UNIFEM's initiatives in the "marketplace of ideas," through its publishing programme and its support of media projects and networks, also focus on national governmental policies.

Figure ES-2

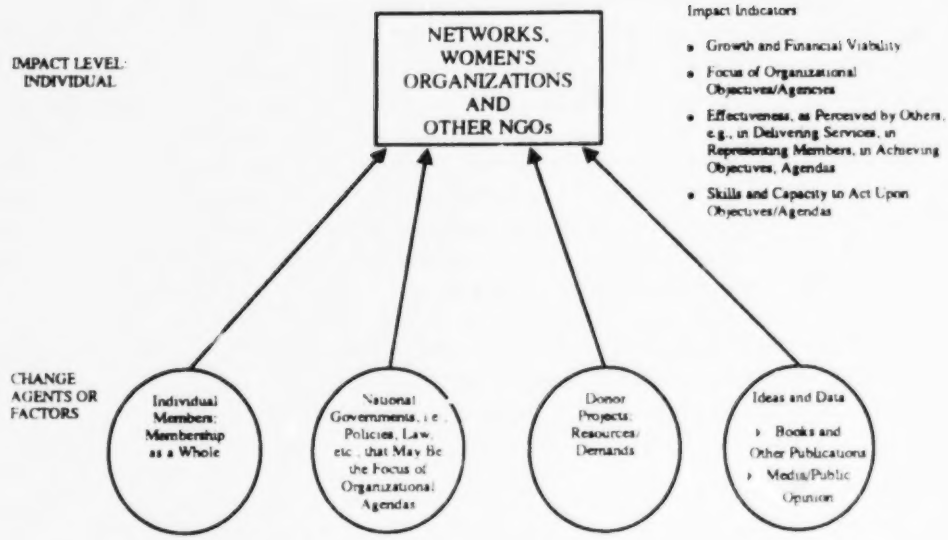

Impact Indicators
• Laws and Policies; Priorities
• Creation of Relevant Units and Positions
• Allocation of Resources
• Skills and Capacity to Act on Priorities; Formulate Policies, Etc.
• Adequacy/Appropriateness of Policy Implementation; Programme Design and Delivery; Enforcement of Laws, etc.
• Representation of Women in Elected/Appointed Positions
IMPACT LEVEL: SYSTEM
NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS
CHANGE AGENTS OR FACTORS
Constituency Groups, e.g., Women's Networks
Elected and Appointed Staff -- Internal Advocacy
International Expectations, Pressures, e.g., UN Declarations
Donor Resources, Demands/Issues
Ideas and Data
› Books and Other Publications
› Media/Public Opinion

/...

The evaluation findings from field data suggest that impact and sustainability, at the level of national governments, results from initiatives aimed at changing national laws, followed by formulation and implementation of policies and programmes that support legislative reform. These changes need to be informed by reliable data and statistics. No country programme examined during the field visits addressed all of these determinants of sustainability, presumably due either to lack of resources or of strategy. For example, successes in promoting legal reform in Brazil have not been supported by a critical mass of agencies and policy-makers and practitioners that are gender sensitive, even though some of the individual projects made small-scale attempts to do so. In contrast, in the Philippines where great efforts have been made to gender-sensitize policy-makers and planners, i.e. impact at the level of the individual, similar attention has not been given to legislative or policy reform at the system level within each of the agencies chosen. The initiative rests primarily at the level of the Executive, and is thus subject to change if there is a change in the President. In contrast, in Brazil the approach has focused first on systemic changes, through the signing of legally binding protocols between the women's machinery, the CNDM, and four other ministries. With the protocols as a foundation, the next step will be to work at the level of the individual, sensitizing key people within the target ministries. In some ways, Mexico has been less ambitious, but extremely effective, in working primarily with SEDESOL, the Ministry for Social Development to provide gender development planning and training. Yet all of these alternative approaches face challenges because resources will be difficult to acquire without data, statistics and technically solid analyses that document women's needs and/or gender gaps. Here, the experiences of India, Indonesia and, more recently, Mexico in the development of systems to gather gender sensitive statistics are critical. The ultimate test of sustainability, of course, is in the type of gender-sensitive programmes that emanate out of governments, and the resources committed to them on a long term basis. The type of approaches and programmes that evolve will influence the strategy and the tasks that fall upon non-government organizations. Tanzania offers an interesting case in point of how gender-sensitive government programmes were designed to be phased out and carried on by independently-run NGOs.

UNIFEM's and Women's Organizations and Networks. The evaluation found that absent UNIFEM's support, a number of women's organizations, particularly networks of women's organizations, would either not exist, or if they existed would not be as large and as strong as they are today. Examples of organizational impact are shown in Figure ES-3. OFAN's existence stems from efforts UNIFEM initiated. Well known organizations such as GROOTS, DAWN, Flora Tristán, Rede Mulher, APDF, ACAFEJ, and WILDAF have benefitted from UNIFEM support, and become stronger in the process. Countless organizations have received recognition, credibility, exposure and international recognition as an outcome of UNIFEM linkages and support. Furthermore, books and other publications supported by UNIFEM reach women's organizations all over the world, bringing with them new ideas as well as "how to" advice. The evaluation was able to partially document some of these impressive and intricate networks and linkages that have resulted from UNIFEM initiatives. These include international, national, regional and local networks and linkages among NGOs, government, academic and business organizations in each of the nine countries visited.

Figure ES-3


IMPACT LEVEL: INDIVIDUAL
NETWORKS, WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER NGOs
Impact Indicators
• Growth and Financial Viability
• Focus of Organizational Objectives/Agendas
• Effectiveness, as Perceived by Others, e.g., in Delivering Services, in Representing Members, in Achieving Objectives, Agendas
• Skills and Capacity to Act Upon Objectives/Agendas
CHANGE AGENTS OR FACTORS
Individual Members: Membership as a Whole
National Governments, i.e., Policies, Law, etc., that May Be the Focus of Organizational Agendas
Donor Projects, Resources/ Demands
Ideas and Data
› Books and Other Publications
› Media/Public Opinion

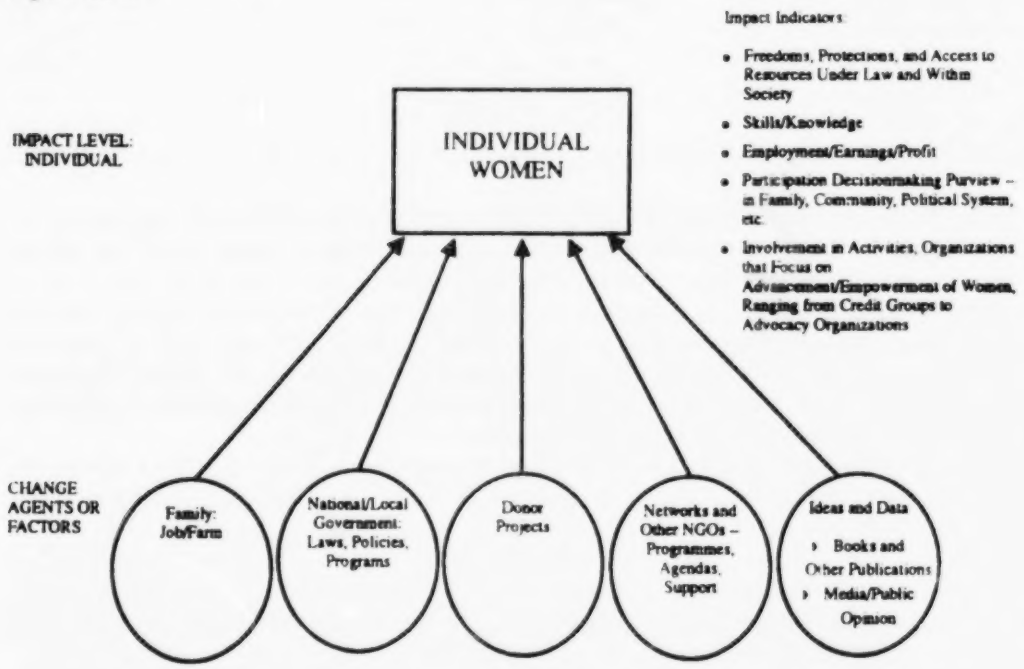
NGOs have also been assisted by actions that UNIFEM takes to bring about changes at the level of national and local government, for they help to create a climate in which NGO's can operate and women's voices are heard. Concurrently, UNIFEM has supported activities on the part of NGOs which put internal demands and pressure on governments. The UN mantle, in conjunction with grassroots mobilization, has had measurable impact, notably in Latin America where a democratic renaissance has provided fertile ground for civil society organizations of the type supported by UNIFEM. One outcome is that more resources are now being provided to women's programmes, although field data shows that these amounts are still minuscule.

While this range of factors can have an influence on women's organizations and networks, an important measure of organizations is their ability to persist over time, i.e., their financial viability, fund-raising ability, management capacity, and the growth of their membership, as well as the issues on which they focus, and their skill in bringing those issues to the attention of those fostering policy and programmatic changes. These are viable measures of institutional sustainability. UNIFEM's initiatives in this regard have been minimal and recent. They center around an institutional strengthening initiative for Flora Tristán in Peru, Rede Mulher in Brazil, and AAWORD in Africa. Yet this approach is highly practical for resource-poor organizations throughout the world, for it reduces their vulnerability in competing for the same limited WID funding, retards donor fatigue, and diminishes continuous reliance on outside funding.

The issue of impact and sustainability is also important to the organizations implementing direct economic activities, such as UNIFEM's income and credit generation projects. Field data indicate that although many of these initiatives have had impact, their sustainability is more questionable. Although the evaluation team did not carry out the kind of research effort that would allow it to comment on how UNIFEM-funded credit projects rated relative to other micro-enterprise credit projects, in terms of fostering enterprise growth, job creation, expansion of markets and sales or rising incomes, the evaluation found that loan recovery rate information, a primary indicator of the programmes' (and implementing organizations's) survival potential, was not clearly documented. In India, for example, the evaluation found that income-generation projects appeared much more sustainable, than those in Namibia, Mexico and Brazil where there are mixed outcomes in terms of ultimate longevity. In some countries, such as Cuba, where the democratic process is closed, income-generating projects, while only affecting a relatively small number of women, provide a vehicle for UNIFEM, as a UN agency, to interact with government officials, and thus, provide an means for influencing women's issues and concerns.

UNIFEM and the Individual. UNIFEM initiatives that affect women as individuals take many forms. Some are direct, such as UNIFEM's income-generation projects, which were evaluated in Brazil, India, Namibia, Senegal and Tanzania. Others are indirect, as *Figure ES-4* indicates.

Figure ES-4


Impact Indicators:
• Freedoms, Protections, and Access to Resources Under Law and Within Society
• Skills/Knowledge
• Employment/Earnings/Profit
• Participation Decisionmaking Purview – in Family, Community, Political System, etc.
• Involvement in Activities, Organizations that Focus on Advancement/Empowerment of Women, Ranging from Credit Groups to Advocacy Organizations
IMPACT LEVEL: INDIVIDUAL
INDIVIDUAL WOMEN
CHANGE AGENTS OR FACTORS
Family: Job/Farm
National/Local Government: Laws, Policies, Programs
Donor Projects
Networks and Other NGOs – Programmes, Agendas, Support
Ideas and Data
› Books and Other Publications
› Media/Public Opinion

In assessing the impact and sustainability of UNIFEM project and non-project activities on women as individuals, one must look for evidence to changes in women's status and empowerment, i.e., the freedoms and projections they enjoy; their access to resources; their employment and earnings; and their involvement in decision-making processes that affect their communities and their

nations. Multiple examples of this impact, or lack thereof, were found in all of the countries visited. Highlights of UNIFEM impact in these areas include changes in the degree to which national laws and policies protect human rights and discourage violence against women, coming out of the UN Conference on Human Rights, which are indirectly traceable to UNIFEM actions. At a more direct level, UNIFEM projects at the country level have provided services and counseling to victims of violence, as well as training and income-generation opportunities to thousands of women.

The evaluation findings suggest that given limited resources, major impact, at the level of the individual, occurs when resources are committed to changing laws and policies, followed by educating women on their rights. Thus, a Brazilian project of women legal promoters which only cost $2,500 had a huge impact on individual women's lives, and was able to attract great donor attention and resources. Other initiatives that affect individuals, but that appear to have broader impact are those that target persons that are in leadership positions, such as the President of Domestic Workers Federation, who later form national and international networks, and influence those whom they lead. Another example is training Parliamentarians who then introduce gender-sensitive laws that affect millions, as was done in Paraguay, or in Morocco where, as a result of the WID Cell project, a specific chapter for women's concerns was added to the country's National Strategic Note.

Another alternative to reach individuals is through programmes and projects that deliver needed services. Credit programmes and counseling to victims of domestic violence are examples of initiatives evaluated during the field work. The evaluation found that there appears to be repressed demand by individuals for a number of services UNIFEM projects provided. Thus, a project in Brazil counseling victims of violence that normally served about 700, served 300 more women the year it had UNIFEM funding. Service delivery programmes require resources and a viable institutional framework. In the case of the violence programmes examined there appears to be strong organizations without resources, in the case of the credit programs just the opposite.

The major question around initiatives to benefit individuals is the extent they are sustainable. Some of the advocacy initiatives that change a person's perception or legal status may forever change a life. Yet others that do not make women more self-sufficient as individuals probably are not. Examples of these are programs to combat violence that do not provide economic alternatives to women victims of abuse, who then return to their old situations. The evaluation team found examples of this phenomenon in UNIFEM violence projects. Others are income-generation projects which do not appear to be financially sustainable, as is the case in one of the projects in Namibia.

2. **Assess institutional capacity and structure of the Fund vis-a-vis resource utilization, programme delivery, management and control at the headquarters and field levels.**

In accordance with the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action, adopted by 189 Governments, and guided by the UN Secretary-General's report to the 50th General Assembly, and General Assembly Resolution 39/125, UNIFEM has defined its Mission as being:

- to promote the economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries,

- to ensure the participation of women in all levels of development planning and practice,

- to act as a catalyst within the UN system for efforts to link the needs and concerns of women to all critical issues on the national, regional, and global agendas, and

- to play a strong advocacy role by fostering a multilateral policy dialogue on women's empowerment.

In line with these new directions, UNIFEM reorganized its regional units (Africa, Asia/Pacific, Latin America/Caribbean and Technical Advisory) into two sub-units. One sub-unit is to focus on the *economic* empowerment of women, and the other on the *political* empowerment of women, with separate geographical focal points for Africa, Asia/Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean that serve both sub-units.

Political and Economic Empowerment. The principal aim of UNIFEM's *Economic Empowerment Programme*, as reported by Noeleen Heyzer, UNIFEM's Director to the UNDP Executive Board in January 1996 is to:

- increase women's access to and control over the means to make a living on a sustainable and long-term basis, and

- receive the material benefits of this access and control.

In order to accomplish the above, UNIFEM's Economic Empowerment Programme intends to focus on: 1) globalization and economic reform, with a focus on trade and new technologies; 2) sustainable livelihoods, with emphasis on women and enterprise development, and 3) natural resource management.

The principal aim of UNIFEM's *Political Empowerment Programme* aims to:

- increase women's control over their lives both within and outside the household, and

- increase the ability of women to influence the direction of society.

In order to accomplish the above, UNIFEM's Political Empowerment Programme intends to focus on: 1) strengthening the role of women in governance and decision-making at all levels; 2) human rights and violence against women, and 3) peace building and conflict prevention.

Organizational Structure. As already noted, Pre-Beijing, UNIFEM had been organized by geographic or regional units. This structure allowed UNIFEM to adapt to the specific needs of each geographical region, and allowed the staff to identify with region-specific concerns and issues. The weakness of this structure was that it emphasized horizontal coordination within a region, rather than linkages across regions in functional areas. Partly to address this weakness, partly to respond to the Platform for Action and the Secretary-General's guidance, and primarily due to a large

downsizing recommended by the Executive Board (8 of 29 positions were cut) UNIFEM reorganized itself into a *functional structure*.

A *functional structure* groups together common functions from the bottom to the top of an organization. In UNIFEM it locates all the administrative people in the Administration Unit, the communications people in the Communications Unit, the economic empowerment specialists in the Economic Empowerment Unit, and the political empowerment specialists in the Political Empowerment Unit. In addition to enabling UNIFEM to accomplish its functional goals (Economic and Political Empowerment), one strength of this structure is that it promotes in-depth skill development of employees in their respective units. However, this structure really works best for organizations that operate in a stable environment, with low uncertainty, and with routine technology -- the actions and techniques used to change organizational inputs (staff and resources) into outputs (project results). UNIFEM operates in a very unstable environment, with high uncertainty and with technology that, by its very nature (innovative, catalytic, experimental) cannot be described as routine. In fact, one might argue that the point at which UNIFEM's strategies become routine (e.g. because of wide diffusion) is the point at which UNIFEM should abandon them, either to other implementors or to other donors.

On the other hand, the strengths of the former *geographical or regional structure* include its suitability to fast change in unstable environments; its greater client satisfaction, because geographic responsibility and contact points are clear; it allows units to adapt and respond to regional and geographic concerns and issues; and it decentralizes decision-making.

Organizational Culture. Every organization has a culture, which describes its own way of doing things. UNIFEM has a very special culture, one that is richly developed and deeply rooted in a system of values and belief, which are shared by its members, that distinguish it from all others. Some organizational theorists have termed this type of organizational culture *ideological*.[3] While most NGOs typically have an ideological corporate culture, many commercial firms are also said to have *ideological cultures*, they include McDonalds, Hewlett-Packard and IBM. The distinguishing feature of an *ideological culture* is its unifying power: It ties the individual to the organization, generating an *esprit de corps*, a "sense of mission." In effect, an integration of individual and organizational goals that can produce synergy, where parts of a system, working together, can produce more than they can apart.

The salient features of an *ideological culture*, which accurately describe UNIFEM are: rich system of values and beliefs; rooted in a sense of mission; clear, focused, inspiring, and distinctive mission; and coordination through selection, socialization and indoctrination of its members.

An *ideological* organization works best in small units, loosely organized, and highly decentralized, which explains UNIFEM's success under its former *geographic structure*, which fits this description well. However, a weakness of this type of organizational structure is in the area of control and accountability, which is precisely where UNIFEM has encountered problems in the past (see *Financial Administration* below).

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[3] Mintzberg, Henry. *Mintzberg on Management: Inside Our Strange World of Organizations*. The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan, Inc. New York: 1989.

And lastly, an *ideological* organization is frequently, if not always, faced with two threats: isolation on the one hand, and assimilation on the other. The first threat, isolation, fits UNIFEM's initial history and the latter, assimilation, appears to be a current threat.[4] However, management theory posits that these twin threats perpetually attend an *ideological* organization.

Communications and Coordination. Communication activity and frequency typically increases as task variety increases. In organizations such as UNIFEM, where frequent problems require more information sharing to solve problems and ensure the proper completion of activities, there is a constant vertical and horizontal flow of information. In addition, the form of communication typically varies by task "analyzability." When tasks are highly analyzable, statistical and written forms of communication (memos, reports, rules and procedures) are frequent. When tasks, such as the bulk of those performed by UNIFEM, are less analyzable, information typically is conveyed face-to-face, over the telephone, or in group meetings.

UNIFEM fits the pattern described above of requiring constant information sharing to solve problems and ensure the completion of activities, due to the wide variety of tasks it performs. UNIFEM also fits the pattern of requiring a larger than normal number of meetings and telephone contacts due to the low "analyzability" of those same tasks.

While relatively recent technological advances (computers, networks, voice mail, faxes, e-mail, pagers, cellular phones, teleconferences and even video conferences) have made communications and coordinations much more rapid, agile and dynamic, the UNIFEM staff have yet to benefit fully from this new technology. There is no centralized programme/project network or database to which everyone has access. The majority of the staff's computers rely on out-dated, outmoded technology which is not capable of handling Windows software. While there is a Local Area Network (LAN), only 21 of UNIFEM's 48 computers are able to run Windows applications. This situation seriously hampers communication and coordination in an organization that must rely heavily on constant information sharing.

Systems and Procedures. UNIFEM's programme and project development processes appear to have become progressively more formal than had been the case during its initial years of operation as the Fund for the Decade for Women. These processes, that guide the formulation of strategies and decisions about resource allocation, are contributing to the emergence of common themes and more frequent linkages between projects, which is beginning to characterize UNIFEM's programming.

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[4] Madeleine K. Albright, United States Ambassador to the United Nations, in a February 21, 1996 letter to Professor Diogo Freitas do Amaral, Chairman of the High-Level Working Group on Strengthening the UN System, has suggested that UNIFEM should not be an independent bureaucracy, but rather should be incorporated into UNDP, arguing that "it is not advisable to have the concerns of women appear to be restricted to one UN entity, but rather they should be fully integrated into all development efforts."

UNIFEM's programme strategy development, project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation systems are all undergoing reassessment and revision, pursuant to management decisions made in early 1996, which are outlined above. These have realigned UNIFEM's programming priorities and processes, as well as its organizational structure. So far, the primary changes appear to be in the project identification and approval process, the abolition of the Direct Action Ceiling (DAC) as a modality for carrying out projects/activities, and the reorganization of the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC), to be headed by UNIFEM's Deputy Director. Briefly, the new PAC processes and procedures which have been instituted are:

Programme and Project Identification. Programmes and projects formulation occurs throughout the year and is included as part of either the annual workplan, the quarterly reports, or by special communication with UNIFEM personnel. Once agreement is reached on a concept, a 2-3 page proposal is developed and input sought from either the Political Empowerment or the Economic Empowerment Units, as appropriate. For proposals of less than $60,000, approval is given directly by the Section Chief on the basis of a written proposal. For proposals over $60,000, the proposal goes for review to the PAC in New York, after review by the relevant empowerment group, before being submitted for funding to any donor agency.

Financial Administration. A review by UNDP's Division for Audit and Management Review (DAMR) of the financial situation of UNIFEM was requested in early 1995, primarily to address the causes of a potential financial deficit of $13.6 million which UNIFEM appeared about to incur at the end of 1994. The DAMR determined that the primary cause of the potential deficit was an error in the operational reserve calculation that generated over-allocations, subsequent over-expenditure, and a resulting deficit. While it is an accepted fact that UNIFEM unknowingly over-committed funds, there appears to be no question that the funds were spent on legitimate, worthwhile and needed programmes and projects.

DAMR estimated that, if voluntary contributions continued at the same rate, it would take through 1997 to recover the $13.6 million and that allocations to new projects could only be made in 1998. However, at this time, through extraordinary voluntary contributions by several cooperating countries, in particular the Netherlands, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, Germany and Canada, the potential deficit has been avoided, and new projects are ready to begin.

The DAMR recommended additional corrective actions to those that had already been undertaken by UNIFEM prior to DAMR's review in three areas: 1) implementation and strengthening of financial monitoring and internal controls; 2) review of project commitments for rephasing and/or cancellation, and 3) reduction of biennial administrative expenditure and technical support costs.

In response, UNIFEM has conducted a review of its entire portfolio, and rephased or cancelled many projects and activities. A review of its administrative expenses and technical support costs was also undertaken, and reductions were made as appropriate, including the freezing of 8 staff slots (4 professional and 4 general services staff) at headquarters, as recommended by the Executive Board.

In addition, UNIFEM has developed step-by-step Programme Cycle Guidelines for financial programme and project management. These guidelines detail 17 specific activities that must be

undertaken, from determination of programme ceilings, to the final closing of individual projects, as well as the person responsible for each activity and the timeline, where applicable. These guidelines have been reviewed by the evaluation team and found to be more than sufficient to address the DAMR recommendations with regard to significantly strengthening UNIFEM's financial monitoring and internal controls. In addition UNIFEM has rescinded the partial funding mechanism which was in place when the potential financial deficit occurred, and which was deemed by the DAMR to have been a contributing factor.

3. **Assess the effectiveness of the Fund's work with its collaborators both in the field and at headquarters.**

The United Nations itself, as well as other international organizations, national governments and NGOs, are among UNIFEM's multiple collaborators. The evaluation found that both in headquarters and field, UNIFEM has been generally effective and well regarded in its work with collaborating agencies for its inputs to their work with women. The rare exceptions from this generally favorable picture seems to emanate from situations in which there is a confusion of mandates vis-a-vis other organizations, or poor communications.

However, a major unrealized opportunity for UNIFEM lies within UNDP itself. UNIFEM is not, and needs to become, an executing agency for UNDP programmes, in order to access UNDP funds. At present doing so is considered comingling of funds and is against UNDP's financial rules and regulations. In addition, UNIFEM is currently exploring the means for providing technical backstopping to the UNDP Resident Coordinators on the implementation of Beijing's PFA at the country level. UNIFEM is currently serving in this capacity in Thailand, Indonesia and Zimbabwe, with its own personnel, with no financial support from UNDP. If it is to continue to expand these service to other countries, as it has been requested, it will need to receive additional financial resources. In addition, UNDP needs to direct each of its country offices to undertake a certain level of activity, in each of their countries, in support of the PFA, as well as prescribe UNIFEM's involvement and participation, in order to enhance these country-level activities.

Collaboration with UN and Other International Agencies

The adoption of a gender-sensitive approach to development planning and implementation, which at times involves the creation of Women in Development units or positions in UN system agencies, task forces and other UN-funded entities is not a responsibility which falls exclusively or even primarily on UNIFEM. All UN system organizations, according to various resolutions, have certain responsibilities for ensuring that their operations and programmes adequately reflect a concern for gender and women in development issues. UNIFEM's mandate within this context is to be of assistance, where appropriate, to other UN agencies in their efforts to carry out this system-wide mandate. In practice, UNIFEM has carried out this role in a number of ways. Its staff participate as gender specialists on project formulation missions of other UN system agencies; they serve as gender focal points for some UNDP offices, and often chair interagency gender task forces and informal meetings at the country level. They also participate, at the agency level, in interagency meetings, workshops and seminars and bring to them a gender perspective. The evaluation found that the ability of UNIFEM to collaborate and participate in these ways differs by country, and depends on the willingness of collaborators to give UNIFEM "a seat at the table." This situation

tends to make collaboration highly personalized, and leads to variations, related to the personal influence and regard that individual UNIFEM staff members can command. At the field level in particular, collaboration is highly determined by the personality, connections, charisma and personal influence strategy pursued or not pursued by UNIFEM staff and UNDP/WID Focal Points.

In most of the countries visited, the collaboration and influence of UNIFEM was positive. For example, in Senegal, UNIFEM/Dakar has been requested to provide advisory services to major partners on critical documents, UNDP Country Strategy Notes and documents, as well as participate in consultative meetings with other international agencies such as the World Bank and USAID. In Tanzania, UNIFEM has been responsible for conducting gender training for other UN agencies and has a lot of influence on other agencies' programmes. In Brazil, UNIFEM served as an important bridge between the government and other donor organizations vis-a-vis identification and sharing of WID initiatives, and defining a methodology for permanent communication and possible co-funding. In India, UNIFEM shares information about its mandate and objectives with other UN agencies and donors. It co-chairs the Interagency Group on Gender and Development and hosts/chairs quarterly meetings with the Large Donor Group and multi and bilateral donors. It is a member of the UNDP Project Approval Committee which reviews all UNDP projects. UNIFEM also participates and gives technical guidance and gender expertise to missions of various agencies including UNDP, ILO, UNIDO, UNESCO and USAID. In the Philippines, UNIFEM contributed with UNDP to the UNDP Human Development Report that incorporated concepts such as gender empowerment, gender measurement and GAD index, and a gender-sensitive Eighth Economic and Social Development Plan. In Mexico, UNIFEM participates in the interagency JCGP working group constituted by UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, and other development agencies. Through these meetings, UNIFEM staff have been able to insert gender considerations into the development planning thinking of these agencies. In each of these cases the evaluation team found that the RPAs or UNDP/WID Focal Points are highly influential. In other countries, this was not necessarily the case. In Indonesia UNIFEM has not established the wide set of linkages with UN agencies that it has in other countries, particularly in terms of getting other agencies to plug in resources for activities. In this instance, part of the explanation lies in recent staff changes. However, there are indications that this situation may be changing since UNIFEM is now part of a new inter-agency working group, established when the UNIFEM Director launched the implementation of the Beijing PFA at the national level in Jakarta.

There are a few cases of less than optimal collaboration. Two that the evaluation team found instructive are the strained relationships between UNIFEM and INSTRAW, and between UNIFEM and DANIDA in Tanzania. Although each of these cases has a complex background, two of the salient common features appear to be disagreements on the interpretation of their respective mandates, and what each party perceives to be a lack of transparency in communication.

Collaboration with Governments

Much of UNIFEM's work with government has centered on mainstreaming and there are wide variations in how mainstreaming actions have evolved. Field visits showed that in Mexico,

Morocco and Namibia, UNIFEM worked with one government agency to remove the constraints that impede women from full and equal participation in the economy and society. In other countries such as Brazil and the Philippines, UNIFEM projects and activities worked with several Ministries. UNIFEM has also worked with various women's machineries for example the SADAC WID Programme or the CNDM in Brazil. In Asia, UNIFEM has worked to gender sensitize government planning and statistics, which has led to similar efforts in Mexico. In various countries UNIFEM has also organized gender training for government officials at the decision-making level. UNIFEM has also been deeply involved in working with governments to prepare position papers for UN conferences. The evaluation found that in almost every case, UNIFEM's collaboration with national governments has been extremely effective. Among all the countries visited, only in Indonesia were central government officials working in WID not intimately familiar with UNIFEM initiatives.

While the evaluation did document some cases of problems with governments, these seem to have occurred in cases where government agencies were the implementing agencies of UNIFEM projects, but did not have the human or material resources or capacity to provide backstopping. The evaluation team found these types of problems in Namibia and Tanzania. In the Philippines and India, problems with government arose due to delays in the provision of project counterpart funds on the part of the government.

Collaboration with NGOs

UNIFEM's work with its NGO collaborators has been outstanding in its ability to create and strengthen networks. The evaluation amply documents the multiplicity and effectiveness of these networks that were developed and enhanced through advocacy, project and non-project activities, and which were strengthened immeasurably by UNIFEM's support of their research and positions papers. These were developed through very inclusive and participatory processes, as part of the preparatory activities for the FWCW held in Beijing. These networks center on human rights, violence, women and the environment, and economic and political empowerment. Indeed, network building and network development appears to be one of UNIFEM's comparative advantages which could and should be tapped by other agencies seeking organizations through which to channel development resources.

Capacity building and network development. Almost from the outset, UNIFEM's global, regional and technical advisory initiatives have included undertaking project and non-project activities which helped to create and strengthen women's and other NGO organizations and networks that took an interest in women's issues. The Once and Future Network (OFAN), an element of the Technical Advisory Section's science and technology emphasis, illustrates UNIFEM's willingness to invest in the creation of networks that did not previously exist. Established in 1993, it has since grown to include over 100 organizations, most of which are themselves networks and about half of which are organizations based in developing countries. Similar support is now being given to organizational development and network building through a UNIFEM project on women's rights as human rights. Two other major long-term network initiatives have been with GROOTS (Grassroots Organizations Operating Together in Sisterhood) and DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era).

Regional or country projects in support of women's groups have generally had a specific focus. They might foster entrepreneurship as with the TOTOTO project in Kenya, or build capacity to provide services such as credit in Tanzania, or to assist women in situations of violence in several Latin American countries (ISIS International). One recent initiative has focused on improving the organizational efficiency and effectiveness of two NGOs with which UNIFEM has worked extensively over the years: Rede Mulher in Brazil, and Flora Tristán in Peru. In addition, numerous women's organizations have been given assistance over the years to prepare for and travel to national and international conferences, including UN Conferences, and, more recently, training in how to influence the agendas and outcomes of such conferences.

In Africa, UNIFEM has supported many different institutions and networks. Evaluation data collected in Senegal and Morocco provide ample evidence of UNIFEM's important role. In Senegal among the networks that UNIFEM has promoted and supported are an *Informal Donor's Network;*, *the Network of Associations on Violence*; the *Network of Legal Clinics; Women Living Under Muslim Law Network and WILDAF (Women in Law and Development in Africa).* In Morocco, UNIFEM helped to strengthen the resource mobilization capability of the Collectif du Maghreb, a North African NGO network.

In the Asia/Pacific region UNIFEM has chosen to work with strong partners, so efforts at capacity building are somewhat less than in other regions. In Vietnam and Laos, it seized what it viewed as a unique opportunity to transform former state apparatus for women into useful organizations focused on the issues and concerns women would face in market-oriented economies. In India, UNIFEM India has worked to build networks, coalitions and alliances, particularly through the Beijing preparatory process, that include research institutions, peasant women, pioneers of the women's movement, academicians and key staff of government ministries. UNIFEM in India also supports activities that help women's organizations gain confidence in their abilities. It helps foster the enabling environment to empower women's organizations to share their experience, expertise, wisdom and practical knowledge with the government and civil society. In Indonesia, capacity building and network development has focused primarily on the academic sector, rather than on NGOs as in other countries. In the Philippines, political coalitions of women's NGOs have been particularly strengthened by the Beijing preparatory process.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, growing democratization has led to a flourishing of non-governmental groups. Within this setting, UNIFEM has been a key promoter of women's organizations, strengthening them both individually and in networks through various project and non-project activities. These have included groups and networks working to promote women's citizenship and legal rights for women and to combat violence. Projects have also promoted linkages between women's NGOs and social service agencies, the academic and private sectors, labor unions and federations, ethnic minorities, and marginalized groups such as domestic workers and prostitutes.

Networking aimed at linking women's organizations and other NGOs has been simultaneously pursued by UNIFEM at the regional, national and sub-national (provincial) levels. Because resources are scarce, UNIFEM staff identifies a tension between funding for national and sub-national networks, noting that at the sub-national level, the effects of UNIFEM's support is often highly visible. National level policies and processes, however, are normally of greater interest to

national networks. In several countries, national networks that received UNIFEM support have developed a policy or political focus as was the case in the Philippines, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Paraguay. These initiatives have been tied to elections, and constitutional revisions or legal reform.

Networks have also emerged to address issues that concern sub-populations, such as a network that focuses on issues that concern black women in the region, which evolved out of a UNIFEM funded meeting of Black Women in the Caribbean, which was also attended by black women from other countries. The Federation of Household Workers in Brazil, which received UNIFEM assistance once UNIFEM's Consultative Committee approved work on human rights issues, is another example of the emergence of an entity that deals with issues that concern a sub-population of women in a region. These projects also demonstrate UNIFEM's ability to address diversity within the women's movement.

One of UNIFEM's important contributions in networking is the founding of the *Coalition on Women and Credit* which promotes and disseminates successful micro-lending approaches for women entrepreneurs. Several case studies co-funded by UNIFEM and produced by the *Coalition* and *Women's World Banking*, provide invaluable information for other institutions to effectively reach women micro-entrepreneurs with credit. These include case studies of SEWA Bank in India, ADOPEM in the Dominican Republic, FINCA in Central America, Bank Rakyat in Indonesia, FOPINAR in Ecuador and the World Council of Credit Unions. In addition, the *Coalition* produced videos of women entrepreneurs in Bolivia *(Banco Sol)*, Bangladesh *(Shakti Foundation and Grameen Bank)*, and Kenya *(Women's Finance Trust)*, which were influential at Beijing in persuading delegates to the FWCW that women were economic victims in need of safety nets. As a result of UNIFEM and the *Coalition's* lobbying, language was eventually adopted in the PFA which focused on women's economic empowerment and the encouragement of national policy changes to ensure low-income women's access to financial services.

In addition to assisting women's organizations, networks and NGOs with direct support, the evaluation team found that UNIFEM has used its UN status to "grease the wheels" with persons in positions of power or influence. Sometimes this support led to the provision of funds, or resources in kind, or the provision of buildings for use in NGO programmes. Examples of this kind were seen in St. Martin, Trinidad and Brazil. Other types of activities which UNIFEM has supported in several countries includes newsletters or bulletins, seminars, conferences and workshops which help women's groups to communicate with and learn from each other. This is yet another approach UNIFEM has used successfully to build and enhance networks.

4. Make concrete recommendations based on the findings of the evaluation, past experience and in light of global strategies for action agreed at the Fourth World Conference on Women on UNIFEM future strategies, programmes, structure and operational tools in the interests of effectiveness, development impact, sustainability and accountability.

The recommendations of this evaluation, which are based on our findings, our past experience, and on the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA), revolve around UNIFEM's future strategies and programmes, as well as its structure and operational tools. These recommendations,

which are listed below, are made in order to enhance UNIFEM's effectiveness, impact, sustainability, and accountability.

A. Recommendations Regarding UNIFEM's Future Strategies and Programmes

1. UNIFEM should remain an autonomous and separate organization within the UN because it is a unique repository of knowledge and experience on how to identify and advocate for women's needs and rights, and how to work with established and emerging organizations to address them.

To the extent that UNIFEM is effective in mainstreaming, and as other organizations take up programmes/projects for women, the need for an independent agency addressing women's needs could be questioned. This view is particularly seductive when other agencies have more resources to devote to women's programmes, when an organization has experienced any kind of financial problem, or when operating in a scarce-resource environment, such as the one the UN is currently experiencing. The evaluation finds that UNIFEM's role is more than to serve as a provider of resources for women's programmes and women's organizations, or to develop "innovative and catalytic" projects and programmes. For an untold number of women's organizations throughout the world, UNIFEM's goals, organizational culture and activities, function as the bridge that allows them to enter the mainstream, and supports them once there. UNIFEM has been likened to a *big sister* which nurtures, sustains, encourages, pushes and unites a wide variety of women and women's organizations, to demand their "place at the table" with governments, international donors and local communities. The evaluation found that no other organization in the UN system is held in as high esteem by women's groups as UNIFEM, notwithstanding its limited resources.

In addition, the evaluation specifically rejects the United States Ambassador's suggestion that UNIFEM be absorbed by UNDP. It is estimated that UNDP currently destines only 2% of its resources for programmes that address the needs and concerns of women. Even if the UNIFEM budget could remain segregated for women once absorbed into the UNDP, this would raise UNDP's total budget for women to only 3%, but at a cost of losing access to the hundreds of women's groups and myriad of women's networks around the world that UNIFEM has so carefully and successfully nurtured over the last two decades. Given UNIFEM's record of accomplishments to date and its potential for the future, it is not an overstatement to say that the damage to women, if UNIFEM were to cease to exist as a separate, autonomous agency, would be catastrophic.

2. UNIFEM's resource base should be significantly increased, commensurate with the growing demand for its services in the implementation of the FWCW Platform for Action.

Given the range and importance of the FWCW's Platform for Action, and the meager resources the donor institutions of the world have been willing to place at the disposal of women, it is imperative that UNIFEM's resource base be significantly increased. In this regard, the evaluation strongly supports and echoes the words James Gustave Speth, UNDP Administrator, spoke in his Plenary address to the FWCW:

> *The Human Development Report tells us that while women are the primary nurturers of families, they also spend more time than men at work. If their labour were given a proper*

market value, women would emerge as the major breadwinners... Understanding the universe of gender relations, which vary enormously from culture to culture, is no easy task. But it must be done by having men and women as equals at the table... No society can realize its potential while repressing the talents of half its people...

... UNIFEM can provide a lever to help women lift themselves to their full potential. But the force of that lever is only as strong as the funds provided by governments. UNIFEM should double its size and then double it again if it is going to be the strong arm that the world's women are justly demanding.

3. ***UNIFEM is encouraged to continue its current programme directions in light of the guidelines suggested by the Beijing Platform for Action, but to more sharply define priorities vis-a-vis anticipated activities in light of resources made available to it.***

The evaluation found that UNIFEM has made considerable efforts to define and sharpen its programme focus in light of the recommendations of the Fourth World Conference on Women. However the needs and demands are many, and the budget is modest. UNIFEM must thus engage in more serious strategic planning of its programme on a global, regional and country basis. It must define areas of results it can accomplish within its budgetary constraints for maximum impact and sustainability, benefitting the largest number of beneficiaries. This recommendation suggests that there should be more discussion (within UNIFEM and with collaborators in headquarters and field) of the relative merit and pay-off of activities and results at the system, organizational and individual level.

While UNIFEM appears to have made strides in moving from isolated project approaches to a more cohesive programme approach, which is to be desired, it has also, in the process, moved away from thinking in project terms, which is not equally to be desired. It is the opinion of the evaluators that UNIFEM now runs the risk of abandoning projects altogether, as it is begins to aggregate objectives into "programmes" that are really just a series of sometimes barely related activities. A development project is an instrument of change which allows us to manage for and monitor results. A project, by definition, is also something at which one can fail (or succeed). In abandoning projects, a time-honored, management-tested way to clarify objectives, define activities, assign responsibilities and track resources, in order to accomplish specified results, UNIFEM will deprive itself of the ability and the methods it needs to track and measure performance, at a time when it is becoming ever more urgent and important that it be able to communicate and demonstrate measurable results. If UNIFEM is to significantly expand its resource base, it cannot continue to do so based on the needs of women alone, accountability will demand that it be able to demonstrate *results*.

4. ***UNIFEM should continue to work at the international and national levels to improve the conditions and minimize the discrimination faced by women, especially poor women.***

One of the major objectives of political and economic empowerment is to reduce gender gaps. In its programmes and advocacy work, and its mainstreaming with international and

government agencies, UNIFEM should continue its efforts to enable women to receive resources, opportunities and services, not in and of themselves, but to also to reduce inequalities that exist between men and women. Crucial in the fulfillment of this recommendation will be to produce high quality, policy-level documents on women's conditions and needs, and to more fully document discrimination and gender gaps through gender sensitive statistics.

5. ***UNIFEM should continue to play a strong brokering role between Governments, the women's movement, women's organizations and networks.***

The evaluation has shown UNIFEM's exceptional ability to act as a broker between government and civil society, particularly vis-à-vis the identification of the needs and aspirations of women. UNIFEM's UN mantel provides legitimacy to women's voices, confers status on their organizations, lends credibility to their concerns, and can mark the road to begin addressing their needs, the road to empowerment. UNIFEM should further strengthen its brokering capacity, and encourage national and local governments to establish and sustain a continuing dialogue with women's organizations and networks, and to complement UNIFEM resources to identify needs and define programmes with and for women.

6. ***UNIFEM should continue to work with women's organizations and networks, and should concentrate on building their organizational capacity and financial viability.***

The evaluation found that one of UNIFEM's great strengths is its ability to work with local groups and organizations. Many of UNIFEM's efforts have helped organizations establish themselves, gain recognition and make their demands heard. The evaluation is replete with examples of UNIFEM's high success rate in furthering this goal. Yet many of these organizations are now at a crossroads, gratified with their accomplishments, yet still facing serious problems of institutional sustainability without UNIFEM and/or other outside funding. This situation is not unique to women's organizations, it is confronted by NGOs throughout the world. Yet women's organizations need to reconcile feminist ideology with organizational growth and financial sustainability. UNIFEM should continue to support organizational capacity to address and advocate for women's needs and rights, and, in addition, UNIFEM should develop and strengthen their capacity to increase membership, raise local funds (government and private) and become financially sustainable. In this realm, UNIFEM can use as a point of departure its experiences in Brazil and Peru with the organizations, *Rede Mulher* and *Flora Tristán*, as well as those of the *Instituto de la Mujer* in Spain.

7. ***UNIFEM's project design and management systems should be strengthened and organized into a Managing for Results approach, in order to ensure the monitoring of projects and the measurement of results, impact and sustainability of benefits.***

With scarce resources, and an expansive mandate, UNIFEM must be continuously mindful of strategy and opportunities for leverage. All activities undertaken need to be considered in terms of their potential contribution to solving the most important structural problems adversely affecting the lives of women. As a practical matter, this means that projects which assist small organizations or limited numbers of women should be undertaken only when they help to develop and disseminate

approaches and capacities with prospects for application to bigger groups and fundamental problems. Sometimes UNIFEM projects can, should, and do work directly on major issues of policy and political will. On other occasions, however, strategies have more steps and are more incremental, and involve the use of UNIFEM resources to develop and test new ideas with prospects for replication; expose people to solutions and approaches that have proven their worth in other locations; build the capacity of key institutions; or simply draw attention to central problems. In some cases, the strategy might be more indirect, such as in the case of Cuba, where undertaking a small income-generation project provided the opportunity for UNIFEM to interact credibly with a range of government officials on a host of broader policy issues. Each of these strategies has been used successfully by UNIFEM, in particular situations, and needs to be judged by the exacting standard of whether it is truly reasonable to hope that the small investments made by UNIFEM have the potential to leverage large changes in the status quo, either nationally or internationally.

New proposals for UNIFEM funding should be scrutinized from a strategic perspective, the logic for undertaking a particular activity should be considered, not only from the perspective of the project's direct beneficiaries, but also with respect to the effects the project can be expected to have on the kinds of larger problems and needs cited above. Wherever possible, UNIFEM should continue to examine the viability of these strategies by monitoring whether pilot and demonstration projects really do lead to replication, and whether policy and institutional strengthening activities really do result in increased prominence for women s issues in national and international fora.

Sometimes it will be practical to conduct such monitoring on a relatively formal basis, but even where it is not, UNIFEM should encourage its programme staff to be self critical in terms of the broader consequences of the activities they undertake and to collect any evidence they can that bears on the plausibility and impact of the strategies they pursue.

These considerations should be incorporated into UNIFEM's criteria for project selection and should be made available, along with other selection criteria, to potential applicants for UNIFEM assistance.

*8. **UNIFEM should continue to document and disseminate both its own experiences as well as women's experiences, in order to make the link between micro and macro levels of development, and encourage the sharing of experiences across regions.***

As noted in Recommendation 1, UNIFEM is a unique repository of experiences on activities and projects designed for, by and incorporating women. These experiences, both best and worst practices, can serve UNIFEM staff and women's groups in different countries, as well as Gender Focal Points in the UN and other international agencies. They can also help decision-makers to understand the possible causal linkages between policy and its effects on individuals, which in turn, affect the whole.

9. UNIFEM is encouraged to continue to bring its experience and technical capacity into international conferences and fora, since their efforts have significantly impacted international and national results in favor of women's needs and concerns.

Another outstanding area of UNIFEM achievement documented in this evaluation, is its role in international conferences and fora, particularly vis-à-vis UN Conferences. Contrary to the sometimes espoused notion that UN Conferences are a waste of resources, the evaluation found that Conferences served an important role by fomenting dialogue and collaboration among international agencies, national, local governments and civil society, particularly at the preparation and post-conference stages. In the case of UNIFEM, the efforts centered around giving visibility to women's issues and concerns, advancing their socio-economic position, and getting agencies to commit resources and develop approaches to address them. International conferences have also helped local organizations and their members from all parts of society to graduate from being local to world class players, share experiences, and create and strengthen their networks.

10. UNIFEM should find mechanisms to leverage UNDP's financial resources to benefit women, including becoming an executing agency for UNDP.

To date, UNIFEM has made insignificant progress in leveraging UNDP resources and in impacting on UNDP programmes. In a recent call for financial assistance for its programmes, UNIFEM was able to access only minimal resources from UNDP. In addition, it is estimated that UNDP currently destines only 2% of its resources for programmes that address the needs and concerns of women. Further, UNDP has little to no opportunity for contact with the women's organizations and networks which UNIFEM actively nurtures and supports. And, conversely, these women's organizations and networks have little to no opportunity to place their needs and concerns before the attention of UNDP policy makers and programme planners. This situation needs to be remedied. It is recommended that UNIFEM and UNDP explore avenues for mutual cooperation as well as ways to bring their joint resources and expertise to benefit women's needs and concerns.

In addition, UNIFEM is not, and should become, an executing agency for UNDP programmes, in order to be able to access UNDP funds. At present, UNDP cannot transfer funds to UNIFEM, as doing so falls under the category of commingling of funds, which is against UNDP's financial rules and regulations. Certification from UNDP/BFA and approval from the Executive Board is required to become an executing agency.

11. The United Nations agencies, including UNDP, should be encouraged to recognize the value of the experience and expertise accumulated in UNIFEM, and to consider devising mechanisms to pay for it when it is accessed.

The evaluation found generally good collaboration between UNIFEM and other UN agencies, often as a result of the outreach of UNIFEM staff members particularly the RPAs. UNIFEM serves an important advisory role to other agencies, commenting on critical documents, reviewing projects, serving/heading committees, providing technical assistance. Staff time involved in performing these activities is an opportunity cost for UNIFEM in terms of meeting the administrative and technical needs of its own programmes. UNIFEM and other organizations are

encouraged to dialog on how reciprocity can be built into collaborative activities, particularly given UNIFEM's meager resources relative to those of other agencies.

In this regard, UNIFEM is currently exploring means for obtaining the additional resources it would require for the provision of technical backstopping to the UNDP Resident Coordinators in the implementation of Beijing's PFA at the country level. UNIFEM is currently serving in this capacity in Thailand, Indonesia and Zimbabwe, with its own personnel, with no financial support from UNDP. If it is to continue to expand these service to other countries, as UNIFEM is being requested to do in support of the PFA, it will need to receive additional resources, *both* human and financial.

12. UNDP should prescribe specific levels of resources in each country for the implementation of the FWCW's Platform for Action, as well as UNIFEM's technical assistance and guidance in the process.

In 1995, when UNIFEM was facing a potential financial deficit,[5] a communication was sent to the field by UNDP's Administrator, requesting country programmes to consider either absorbing or contributing to UNIFEM country programmes. Given that absolutely no programmes were absorbed and that no UNDP contributions were generated, and given UNDPs abysmally low funding for women's programmes, which has been estimated to be in the neighborhood of 2%, it is imperative that UNDP prescribe and direct each of its country offices to undertake a specific minimum level of activity, tied to a percentage of country programme funds, in support of the PFA. In addition, UNDP should prescribe UNIFEM's direct involvement and participation in this process, in order to provide technical assistance and guidance in support of these activities.

13. UNIFEM should summarize, publish and widely disseminate its Advocacy tools, approaches and methods.

UNIFEM appears to have developed significant Advocacy tools, approaches and methods, of the calibre of their highly effective publication *Putting Gender on the Agenda*. These Advocacy tools, approaches and methods should be adapted and translated, for use in different geographical regions.

In addition, UNIFEM should create a Home Page site for its Advocacy tools, systems, methodologies and approaches on the World Wide Web for efficient distribution, and up-to-the minute dissemination of information to NGOs around the world.

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[5] The potential financial deficit was due to an error in the operational reserve calculation, which has been addressed, and the use of partial funding mechanisms, which have been abolished.

B. Recommendations Regarding UNIFEM's Structure and Its Operational Tools

14. UNIFEM should maintain flexibility and accountability in its administrative procedures, in order to respond to the needs of women.

As noted in Recommendation 1, the overwhelming majority of women's organizations interviewed during this evaluation noted they had thrived because of the flexibility of UNIFEM's administrative procedures relative to those of other more rigid and bureaucratic donor organizations. Notwithstanding, UNIFEM must also guard not to deviate too broadly from the results it seeks, and must hold itself, and those whom it funds, accountable for specific impact-level results, as opposed to activities.

15. UNIFEM should be significantly strengthened in terms of its staff and human resources.

UNIFEM staff currently have the necessary skills, expertise and experience to address UNIFEM's world-wide programmes. However, their numbers are grossly inadequate for the tasks at hand. The recent downsizing, in response to the Executive Board's recommendation to freeze 8 UNIFEM positions by 1997, while contributing to a necessary reduction in administrative costs, also led to a restructuring of the organization that is not in consonance with its mission and mandate (see *Recommendation 18*). In addition, the downsizing has created an untenable burden for those UNIFEM staff members that remain, since the PFA has effectively increased UNIFEM workload.

It is recommended that the eight staff positions, that have been frozen, be reinstituted, and that additional human resources be made available to UNIFEM in order that it may be in a position to contribute to and assist with the implementation of the Platform for Action in countries around the world.

16. UNIFEM should increase its number of Regional Programme Advisors.

UNIFEM currently has only ten Regional Programme Advisors (RPAs) that are expected to operates in 65 countries, e.g, the Senegal RPA is supposed to cover 25 countries, and the Zimbabwe RPA is supposed to cover 23 countries. The serious imbalance between the RPA's available time and their workload leads, necessarily, to a concentration on programmes and activities in the country of residence. UNIFEM needs to significantly increase its number of RPAs, in order to expand and deepen its regional coverage. This is particularly important if UNIFEM is to serve as a catalyst and function as an important resource to UNDP and other development agencies in the implementation of the PFA.

17. UNIFEM should strengthen and increase the number of training programmes it offers on a yearly basis for WID Focal Point persons within UNDP and other UN development agencies.

There seems to be some confusion as to the locus of responsibility for the training of UNDP/WID Focal Points in gender sensitive development planning. UNDP/WID Focal Points interviewed frequently received little or no training, nor were they familiar with UNIFEM strategies, priorities, systems and procedures. It is recommended that all UNDP/WID Focal Points world-wide

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receive training from UNIFEM in gender sensitive development planning and in UNIFEM methodologies, systems, procedures and resources. Given UNIFEM's paucity of resources, and the fact that the personnel being developed are UNDP staff, it is further recommended that UNDP pay UNIFEM to undertake this training.

18. UNIFEM's organizational structure should be aligned in such a way that it enhances inter and intra-regional collaboration and communication, and strengthens responsibility allocation and accountability.

During the evaluation period, UNIFEM was organized into a *geographic structure* which leads to greater client satisfaction because geographic responsibility and contact points are clear; it allows units to adapt and respond to regional and geographic concerns and issues; and it decentralizes decision-making. The weakness of this structure is that it emphasizes horizontal coordination with a region, rather than linkages across regions in functional areas.

Attempting to address the weaknesses which the *geographic structure* presented for UNIFEM, and being forced to cut 28% of its staff positions (8 out of 29) as recommended by UNDP's Executive Board, as well as attempting, at the same time, to address the dual agendas of Political and Economic Empowerment which UNIFEM received as an outgrowth of the PFA, UNIFEM chose to reorganize itself into a *functional structure* in February, 1996. This structure works best for organizations that operate in stable environments, with low uncertainty, and with routine technology -- the actions and techniques used to change organizational inputs (staff and resources) into outputs (project results). Given that UNIFEM operates in a very unstable environment, with high uncertainty and with technology that by its very nature (innovative, catalytic, experimental) cannot be described as routine, a functional structure is considered inappropriate for UNIFEM.

It is recommended that UNIFEM reorganize itself into a *matrix structure* which is the organizational design best suited to organizations, such as UNIFEM, that operate in high uncertainty environments, with nonroutine, interdependent technologies, and with dual goals of product innovation and technical specialization. The strengths of the *matrix structure* is that it can achieve the necessary coordination to meet dual demands from the environment (innovation and specialization); is flexible in the sharing of human resources across functional lines (political and economic) and across geographical regions; is suited to complex decisions and frequent changes in unstable environments; and provides opportunity for functional and geographical skill development. The weaknesses of the *matrix structure*, which need to be managed, are: it causes participants to experience dual authority, which can be frustrating and confusing; it means participants need good interpersonal skills and extensive training; it is time-consuming -- frequent meetings and conflict resolution sessions; and it will not work unless participants understand it and adopt collegial, rather than vertical-type relationships.

In order to manage against the weaknesses inherent in the *matrix structure*, it is further recommended that training be imparted to all UNIFEM staff members in management and interpersonal skills, including use of personal influence and conflict resolution strategies.

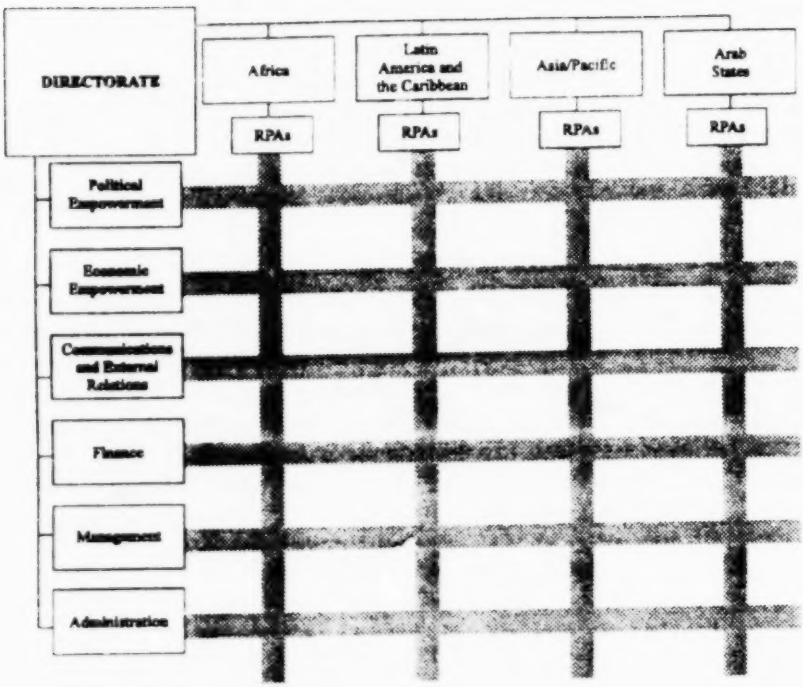

Figure ES-5. Matrix Structure

19. UNIFEM's work space and computer software and hardware should be significantly upgraded.

UNIFEM staff is currently working with badly out-dated systems, particularly in data base management, which reduces their ability to organize, analyze and share information. It is recommended that financial resources be allocated to provide the necessary hardware and software to install a state-of-the art Windows-based computer system for each and every UNIFEM staff member. The resources allocated should include an additional UNIFEM staff member to act as Computer Systems Administrator on a full-time basis.

In addition, the current work and office space, as well as its filing cabinets, are considered inadequate for UNIFEM's current needs, and will require expansion, with additional office space and meeting rooms at headquarters. It is further recommended that UNIFEM is in need of a state-of-the art file room with appropriate shelving and filing equipment, given that their current file space and equipment is considered inefficient and cumbersome, leading to disarray and disorganization.

20. UNIFEM should institute a Management Information System (MIS) that tracks all activities, programmes and projects from design to completion.

While UNIFEM's records are adequate for individual staff project management and at the Section level, this information is not readily available to the organization as a whole. It is recommended that UNIFEM institute a comprehensive MIS data base that tracks and monitors individual projects by function and by region, with information on project objectives, accomplishments, results, and impact, as well as fund approvals and actual expenditures (see *Recommendations 3 and 7*).

In addition, it is recommended that UNIFEM track all resources allocated to projects and activities, including additional outside funding and contributions, acquired through whatever means, in order to be able to document its effectiveness as a broker and its ability to leverage resources. Currently, UNIFEM's records track only what it terms *cost-sharing* contributions to its projects. UNIFEM does not systematically keep track of additional outside funding, nor does it track resources provided by governments and other donors for follow-on activities and projects, nor does it make any attempt to track "in-kind" contributions. This limits UNIFEM's ability to point to its own effectiveness as a broker, and does not enable it to quantify nor otherwise report on its ability to leverage resources.